

## The Rejected Werewolf Princess by Didiadeyemi Chapter 141-150

Chapter 141

CAMILLA'S P.O.V

There was a palpable relief that could be felt by everyone once Alara was in the cells. For the next three days, there was nothing but peace and calmness. The pandemonium in the towns had been dispelled because everyone was sent copies of her transcripts. The people knew what she had done and they knew that Ryker was innocent. The truth was, I wasn't as bothered by her alliance to the vampires as I should have been. Thinking back on it, it made a lot of sense. She was always sneaking around and in places where she shouldn't be.

I couldn't believe I didn't piece it together sooner. She must have been the one who told the people about what happened at the waterfall with Alastair. I was relieved to know that she had been caught but I was more relieved that Ryker was vindicated. I saw how the weight of the accusation was crushing him and I couldn't stand it. He was always helping me and I felt relieved that I was able to play a small part in helping him.

There was a visible spring in his step over the past two days. He seemed lighter and he spent more time with the girls. It was great seeing him happy and I couldn't help but share in his joy, that was why I didn't tell him about my plans this morning. When I woke up, I simply told him that training might run a bit late. Alara's execution was set for evening but I wanted the chance to speak to her before then. There was a lot I still didn't understand.

After an hour of training with Loris, I called an end to it. I didn't even bother changing first before I made my way to the dungeons. If the guards were surprised to see me, they didn't say a word. They just watched me carefully as I made my way to the front of her cell. She looked like a mess with her red hair covered with dust and grime and her pale grey dress.

She didn't turn to me as she spoke. "Have you come to gloat? Is seeing me in a cell up to your standards? After this evening, I will be out of your hair."

"For someone who is about to die, you don't sound very apologetic or worried. Why is that?" she finally turned to me and I saw the guards clutch their weapons tighter but she wasn't a threat. She was behind silver bars and was chained with silver. "Give us a minute."

They were stunned by my order. Even Alara was shocked because her brows rose so high that they disappeared behind her hairline. The guards hesitated for a second before nodding and exiting in a single file. Alara waited until the last of them had disappeared before she spoke.

"Is this your way of telling me that I don't scare you?" she drawled out, "I

remember a time when I did, I remember when I was the biggest problem in your life. It was a good

I ignored her taunt and made my way over to the bench that was close to the wall and sat down. Her eyes tracked my every movement with rapid attention. It was almost as if she expected me to hurt her and was trying to brace herself for it and I couldn't help but shake my head.

"I had no plans to hurt you, Alara, I am not you," I told her and I saw relief flash across her features before she quickly masked it.

"I wasn't worried about that. I don't care if you put a spear through my heart right now."

"You can say that all you want but I know better, Alara. I didn't come here to argue with you, I just have a few questions that I think you can help me answer. If there is one thing I know, it is that you take pride in your brilliance. You could have easily gotten away with this but you didn't. Why is that? Why did you ally yourself with the vampires in the first place?"

"Flattering me will get you nowhere," she shrugged but I could see the small smile growing on her lips. "The only reason you were able to get me was because I made the mistake of telling you where I actually came from. I suppose a part of me hoped that something bad would come out of your meeting and you would end up wiping the pack. I miscalculated because I was in a panic."

I sighed. "Let's make a deal, Alara. I know you don't want to die and I can make your death as painless as possible. If you tell me what I need to know then I will ensure that it is over within seconds."

I saw her debate it for a minute before turning away. I let out a sigh of defeat. I actually hoped that she was going to agree but since she didn't, I stood to my feet and prepared to leave. I had just gotten to the door when she finally spoke.

"Fine, but this is happening on my terms."

I tried to hide my excitement as I made my way back to the bench. She wasn't looking at me and I wasn't sure if it was to hide her emotions or just because she could. Alara enjoyed power games and with her, it was sometimes hard to know where you stood.

"I wasn't born in that town. I got there when I was eighteen. My parents were deadbeats who didn't deserve to be parents. When I was six, they dropped me off in front of a vampire cave to be killed. Alastair found me and took me in. He always told me how much potential I had and he raised me. No matter how much I begged, he wouldn't turn me but once I was old enough, he helped me kill my birth parents. It was the best moment of my life. I was sixteen then and Alastair made love to me in the living room right next to their

dead bodies.”

I didn't know what I was expecting but that wasn't it. My mouth fell open in horror and

I was grateful she couldn't see my face because she would have definitely stopped her story.

“You were a child and he practically raised you.”

She turned to me so I could see her roll her eyes. “He didn't groom me if that is what you think. I was old enough to know what I wanted and if you're going to make assumptions about my life then we might as well just end the story right here.”

I knew that whatever he had done had tainted her for life and there was nothing I could do about it so I nodded. As much as I knew the story would disgust me, I was prepared to listen to it in its entirety. When she saw that I wasn't attacking Alastair anymore, she continued.

“When I turned eighteen, he told me that it was dangerous for me to be with the vampires and he convinced me to move into that town. He picked my victims for me, he chose men who had wronged him in the past and my job was to seduce them and create a path for him to kill them. It was very easy and I was good at my job. No one could pin it on me. I was having the time of my life until he asked me to come here. I suppose you already know the rest of what happened. He tried to get you as revenge for what your father did to him but you managed to best him. I'm surprised.”

“You're not pissed that I killed your lover?” I asked slowly and she shook her head. “Why not? He was your first love?”

“I outgrew Alastair,” she said simply. “Ryker was supposed to be another target but there was something about him. He was the only person who didn't look at me like a prized cow. He didn't look at me as something to be won. He didn't immediately want to have sex with me and I loved that, I craved it even. I knew I had to have him and more so, I knew that you didn't deserve him.”

She spat the last words like a curse and I flinched from the sheer violence of her words.

“When Alastair died, I figured it was my chance to get him to myself.”

“You failed,” I deadpanned and she shrugged. “For what it is worth, Alara, I think you have been dealt a terrible hand at life. You grew up with the wrong people but that is no excuse for what you did. I want nothing more than to take you off the execution list and try to rehabilitate you but I cannot guarantee that you will not try this again.”

“Let me make this easy for you, I will,” she stated it simply. “There is no changing me, this is who I am. Now, if you are done bothering me, I would like to get some rest before my execution. Even if I am dying, I need to look good.”

I was shocked that anyone could be this dismissive but there was nothing I could do except honor her wishes because she had once again turned her back to me. I slowly made my way out not really understanding what had happened. I was so distracted that

I didn't realize Ryker was at the top of the steps and I bumped into him. I would have fallen backwards if he didn't reach out to wrap his arms around my waist. I grasped onto his shoulders for dear life.

"Are you alright?" he asked and I nodded. "I was told that you were with her. Did she say anything to you? Did she do anything?" I shook my head but he wasn't convinced. "Are you sure? Why did you go? Why didn't you tell me that you were going?"

"Relax," I ordered and I waited until he had taken a deep breath. "I wanted to know some things and only she could tell me. I didn't want her story to die with her."

He narrowed his eyes at me. "You've always been kinder than the rest of us. What did she say?"

"I'll tell you, but not here. I don't want to spend any more time than I need to. I want to be with you in our space, does that make sense?"

His features softened and he leaned down to kiss my forehead. "Of course, baby, come with me. I know the perfect place for us."

## **The Rejected Werewolf Princess by Didiadeyemi Chapter 142-143**

Chapter 142

CAMILLA'S P.O.V

Ryker and I went for a walk around the palace all afternoon before finally deciding to pick Audrey up from school by ourselves. She was so excited to see us by the and

gate let out a shriek that had my ears ringing for minutes after. She was so excited to see us and chattered on about everything that had happened with her at school. It felt good to be able to have a normal day with my daughter and I wanted to cherish that moment for as long as possible but the goddess had other plans because I got to the front of the palace and saw s=a strange man that I had never seen before.

He was tall and dark as if he spent so much time under the sun. From his demeanor, it was obvious that he was a free spirit, his hair was reaching his shoulders and blew in the wind behind him, his sleeves were rolled up and the top of his buttons undone. He held up his hands to show that he wasn't a

threat but he seemed like the kind of person who could hold his own in a fight. I placed my hands on Audrey's shoulders. "Why don't you go wait inside for us? We just need to handle this."

If she was disappointed, she didn't let it show. She just nodded and I watched her skip away into the palace. Once I saw that she was safe, Ryker and I made our way to the stranger. He looked at me first and his eyes ran down my body. It wasn't in a sexual way, it was more analytical, as if he were trying to get a reading on me.

"Who are you?" I asked finally and that seemed to snap him out of his thoughts.

"You look like her," he said simply and I immediately knew who he was and what he was referring to. "She told me about you, you must be the Queen." He bowed slightly and offered the same courtesy to Ryker. "She doesn't know I'm here but I heard that an execution was taking place and I figured it was the right time."

"Am I missing something?" Ryker asked and I remembered that Christine had only told me about the handsome stranger so I gave him a quick rundown via the mind link. As soon as I was done, Ryker assessed the stranger with a frown and crossed his arms over his chest. "If she doesn't know you are here then why are you here?"

"I want to make things right," his explanation was cryptic and that didn't sit well with Ryker who hadn't reduced his glare one bit. "She left abruptly last time and I just thought that maybe we could-"

"If she left abruptly, doesn't that stand to reason that she doesn't want to see you?" he asked harshly and I turned to him with wide eyes. I had never seen Ryker's protectiveness up close and I wasn't sure whether to be embarrassed on Christine's behalf or to smile knowing that he thought of her as family that needed protecting.

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"I understand that you are protective of her but I mean her no harm. You can ask her yourself, she stayed with me while she searched for proof against Alara. If I wanted to hurt her, I would have done it a long time ago."

Ryker hesitated and I was sure that he would send the stranger packing. After everything that happened, trusting new people didn't come easy to any of us. Just as he was about to speak, I heard a gasp from behind me and I turned to see Christine. Her eyes were wide and her cheeks were a bright pink color as she stared at the man in front of us. She looked like she was unsure of whether she wanted to run to him or run away from him.

"Juan?" she asked and he gave her a soft smile. "What are you doing here?"

“I came to watch the execution of the woman he killed my father,” he explained and I saw sadness creep into her expression. “I also came to see you.”

She blushed harder and I slightly nudged Ryker who was taking in the entire exchange but not the same way I was. He looked hesitant and a little unsure but I was just happy that there was someone who could have her blushing this hard. Christine had always been the strong one and it was a relief to see her looking not to strong.

“Perhaps we should take this inside before we give anyone a show,” Ryker announced before turning to Christine. “I need a word with you first.”

While they walked away, I turned to Juan. “Come with me please, I will have the maids show you to a room.”

Once Juan was settled, I went in search of Ryker and Christine. I found them in her room, she was seated cross legged on the bed while he sat on the chair facing her. She looked mildly annoyed while he looked proud of himself and I braced myself before walking in. Once Christine saw me, she let out a sigh of relief.

“Please tell your mate that I am old enough to handle myself. I don’t need anyone watching out for me or trying to protect me.”

“Please tell Christine that I don’t exactly trust strangers who show up at my door.”

Christine let out an audible growl and I couldn’t stop the laugh that bubbled out of me. They watched me with varying looks of shock and concern until I managed to calm down.

“Ryker, cut it out. He seems like a decent guy but if it makes you feel any better, you can do an in depth search on him,” I told him and although he started out frowning, he seemed to like the second part of my sentence. I turned to Christine. “After everything that happened, I think his protectiveness is warranted, don’t you?”

“You have a point,” she mumbled. “I just don’t know why he would come here.”

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“He already told you why, he came for you. Is there something you’re not telling me?” her cheeks heated and I got my answer. I turned to Ryker. “I’m going to need leave us be for a while. We have some girl talk to attend to.”

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He mumbled something inaudible under his breath and disappeared. The moment the door was shut, I turned to Christine who pulled me to sit next to her. I could tell it was a big step for her to even consider telling me. She was the kind of person who kept her cards awfully close to her chest.

"It happened the night I got there. After he gave me a place to stay, I don't know how it happened. It was almost like I wasn't in control of myself. One minute I was thanking him for giving me a place and the next minute, I woke up in bed next to him," she exclaimed and my mouth fell open. "Don't give me that look, I know it was irresponsible."

"It isn't that, I'm just shocked is all. Was it good?" Her cheeks heated before she nodded once. "That's all that matters I guess. I'm not going to tell you what to do or how to do it but I think you need to be a little less hard on yourself. You had fun, if you want it to end at that then let him know but he wouldn't come all the way here if he thought it was just harmless fun."

I gave her shoulder a small squeeze before walking out of the room. She needed space to think about what I had just told her and I needed to get ready for the execution.

I had never attended an execution in my life so I wasn't sure what to expect. I promised I would make it easy for her so instead of being hung like we originally planned, she was going to be executed using a guillotine. It was much bigger than I expected and I tried to stay as far away from it as possible. The turnout of people was also much bigger than I expected. I didn't think so many would come to watch her die.

Aurora and Audrey were in the palace with some maids. I didn't want them seeing this at such a young age. Christine was by my side while Juan stood to the side with the guards from the palace. His eyes never left Christine while she tried to pretend like she couldn't see him.

Alara was brought out in silver chains and immediately, the people began to yell. Some went as far as to throwing rotten food at her but she never once faltered. She had her head held high like she was a Queen in front of her kingdom. I couldn't help but be impressed. It wasn't easy to face a crowd of people who wanted you dead. She was led to the guillotine and forced to her knees.

"Alara, you have been sentenced to death," I had been given a script by the elders. It wasn't long but it was still hard to say. "Do you have any last words?" "I do, actually," she announced and she turned to face the crowd with a cruel smile. "It was an honor watching you all burn and I hope that in my next life, I get to see it all

over again."

To say that people were stunned would have been an understatement. She

looked around and her gaze locked on Juan. She looked shocked to see him but she quickly recovered and smiled before speaking. "I'll say hi to your daddy in hell."

Juan wanted to go after her but the guards held him in place. I could see the pure and undiluted anger on his face. He realized that the guards were not going to let him go to her, so he turned on his heels and stormed out.

Christine had turned to him and she was itching to go but I grabbed her wrist. She could go after the execution.

I turned to the executioner and nodded. I watched as he put the bag over her head and positioned her but I turned away when the guillotine fell. I knew that until the day I died, I would never forget that sound.

I turned to Ryker who I realized watched the entire thing without flinching. I released Christine and she didn't wait one second before taking off after Juan.

"Is it over?" I asked and he nodded.

"She's gone."

## Chapter 143

### CAMILLA'S P.O.V

As per tradition, we had to wait until the place was cleared out before we could leave. We waited for the last person to return to their house and for the executioner to carry the body away. I didn't look at it once, I didn't want to see her body. I didn't know how but I knew that I was going to throw up if I saw it.

I had already told Ryker what I learned from her but unlike him, I still had a soft spot for people and I still felt like if she was dealt a better hand at life, she would have been a better person.

"Everything has been cleared out," Ryker told me and I finally risked a glance.

The guillotine was still there and I could see the blood coating the blade and the floor in front of it. I knew someone would clean it up before tomorrow but I couldn't help but stare at it.

"Isn't it funny?" I asked and he turned to me.

"Isn't what funny, baby?"

"One second she was terrorizing us and the next, she is dead. It was so easy and yet so hard. She was such a torment but at the end of the day, she was just blood and meat like the rest of us."

"I

guess that is one way to look at it," he reached out to me and helped me to my feet. "I think we should just be grateful that she is gone and that we have no need to worry anymore. This is the first time in a long time that we have even a semblance of peace. We can finally take a break, maybe we can even take a vacation. The goddess knows that we both need one."



I couldn't help but chuckle. "Perhaps we could go to my father's vacation house. Christine and the girls never made it there. It might be good for the two of us. What do you think?"

"That sounds like a good idea but first we need to actually find Christine. I wonder where she ran off to with that guy."

As if on cue, I heard Christine's voice. It sounded muffled meaning she was a bit of a distance away but she was clearly yelling. We followed the sound until we got to the private living room. The door was slightly ajar which explained why her voice carried. Juan was standing with his back to us and he was so tall that he completely dwarfed Christine from our vision. Ryker wanted to go in but I grabbed my hand and shook my head.

"No, listen," I instructed and although I could tell that he didn't agree, he nodded.

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Christine was the first person to speak. "You should never have come here. I should never have come after you. It was a mistake. I told you as much when I left in the morning. It never should have happened."

"Don't insult your own intelligence by claiming it was a mistake, cara mia, you know better than that. You knew what you were doing and it scared you because you liked it."

"Fuck off," she tried to shove at his chest and although he stumbled back a little. He grabbed both of her hands and kept them pinned. "Let me go, I have nothing I want to say to you."

"Good, then you should listen," he instructed. "I don't know who hurt you or made you feel like you had to put up walls but you don't have to do that with me. I'm willing to wait as long as it takes for you. I don't care how long that is, even if I have to wait until the end of my life."

"Stop saying that," her voice was barely over a whisper and I knew I shouldn't have been eavesdropping on their conversation. It was a private moment between the both of them but I couldn't look away.

"Why not? It is the truth," he walked her backwards until she hit the wall. "Let me prove this to you, all you need to do is give me a chance."

"I have a mate," she blurted out and I winced slightly. "I rejected him but he never accepted it."

Juan stilled. "Do you want him?"

Christine didn't hesitate before she responded. "No."

"Good, nothing else matters," I watched as he kissed her and that was exactly what had me looking away.

It was their moment and they deserved to have it to themselves. I was surprised that even Ryker agreed because he gently closed the door. I would have expected that he would storm in there and go all protective on her but a small smile was playing on his features.

"I

guess you approve of him then," I mused aloud once he had gone a few feet away and he nodded slowly. "What made you change your mind?"

"He didn't run when she said she had a mate," he said simply. "A lesser man would have gone running for the hills when he realized that he had a little competition. The mate bond is a very powerful thing and not many are willing to go against it."

"Juan was," I finished for him and he nodded.

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"I still don't know him enough to like him but I guess that he is doing well enough for himself right now. He still has a lot to prove but for now, I think he has done enough."

That was enough for me. Ryker had the best judgment in people most times and if he approved of Juan then so did I. Christine deserved to be happy and if Juan was that man then I would root for the two of them until the day I died. While they spent their time together, Ryker and I decided to spend some time with our daughters. They didn't know what had just happened and they didn't need to know. All they knew was that we were safe and that was good enough for me.

I didn't see Christine again until dinner time. She was walking down the hallway towards the dining room. I was holding Audrey's hand because Ryker had gone ahead of us with Aurora. When she saw me, she smiled wide and I wasn't sure if it was in an attempt to draw my attention away from the love bite on her neck or simply because she was happy to see me.

"You look well," I said simply and her cheeks heated slightly. "Is Juan going to be joining us for dinner?"

"I don't think so. He isn't- we aren't."

"If he is giving you love bites then I would believe that you are. What is the excuse?"

"Mummy, what is a love bite?" I had momentarily forgotten that Audrey was with me and I scrambled my brain for a possible response that was age appropriate.

"Well, it is when you love someone so much that you bite them," was what I settled on and brows furrowed. "Biting people is wrong, don't even think about it but some people don't know how to express their affection for others and end up biting."

"Aunt Christine has a friend who bites her?" she asked again and her innocence made the entire situation more embarrassing than it should have been. "Why does he do that? Doesn't he know that bites hurt?"

"These ones don't," Christine stepped in. "Don't worry, you'll understand later." She looked up at me with accusing eyes and I couldn't stop myself from laughing. "I'll go ask him if he wants to join us."

"Try not to be late," I called out to her as she walked off and she flipped me off.

I walked into the dining room smiling from ear to ear and I could see Ryker's confused face as he took me in. I assured him that he would understand soon enough and although he seemed satisfied with that answer, the confusion never left his face. When Juan and Christine walked in a few moments later, understanding dawned on his features.

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Juan looked a little nervous as he took the seat to Audrey's right. I could tell that he was unsure of how to act. I wasn't sure if it was because he hadn't been around kids or because it was Ryker's kid and he knew for a fact that Ryker was not his biggest fan in the world.

"Thank you for inviting me for dinner. It is an honor," he began but I cut him off.

"Pleasantries will get you nowhere in this family. You're better off cursing us out," he blinked at me in shock and I smiled. "I'm kidding, it was no problem. You are a guest and it would be cruel of us to leave you alone while we ate."

"Are

you Aunt Christine's friend?" Audrey asked and he turned to her with a small smile as he nodded. "My mummy said you bite her. Why do you do that? Don't you know that biting is bad?"

Ryker choked on his food as he tried to hide his laugh, my cheeks heated pink, Christine looked like she wanted the ground to swallow her whole and Juan blinked repeatedly like he wasn't sure how to respond.

"Camilla, what did you tell our daughter?" Ryker whispered to me and all I did was shrug. He ran his hands down his face and opened his mouth in preparation to talk to Audrey when Juan spoke.

"It's a bad habit and I promise I'll stop. Will you help me?" Juan asked and Audrey looked stoked at being asked because she nodded eagerly. "I'm certain that with your help, I'll be able to reform myself in no time."

Audrey turned to Ryker. "I like him, daddy, can he stay here forever and ever?"

"Why don't we eat first, hm? You're not supposed to talk at the table," Ryker told her and she pouted but listened and focused on her meal.

I looked over at Juan and mouthed an apology but he shrugged. I was relieved that he was taking it so lightly. I would have been mortified if Audrey had asked me the question. He just turned to Christine and winked at her. Her cheeks heated and she promptly looked away.

I didn't know about Ryker but I liked Juan and I had to agree with Audrey on this one, I wanted him to stay.

## **The Rejected Werewolf Princess by Didiadeyemi Chapter 144**

### Chapter 144

It felt almost weird for things to be this calm. I couldn't remember the last time I had such an easygoing day. I woke up in my mate's arms and there was no rush, I could just lie down and watch him sleep. Most days, Ryker was up before I even thought about stirring but he came in late last night and I had already gone to bed. I had no idea what he was doing before bed and as curious as I was, I realized that it wasn't very important.

He looked a thousand years younger when he slept and when his hair fell over his face, I couldn't stop myself from reaching out to tuck it back. On hindsight, I probably should have left it alone because Ryker was a very light sleeper and the moment I touched him, I heard him breathing change.

"Are you watching me sleep?" he asked without opening his eyes and I shrugged. There was something about his sleepy voice that had my insides

clenching deliciously. He slowly opened his eyes and gave me a lazy smile. "Good morning, baby."

"Hi," was all I was able to mumble back. I realized that my hand was still on his face and I immediately wanted to snatch it back but he held my wrist in place.

"Not yet," he whispered before kissing the inside of my wrist. "What are your plans for today?"

"For the first time in a long time, I have nothing planned. It was just going to be a lazy day."

A wolf like grin grew on his face and before I could ask what that was about, I was flipped onto my back with him hovering over me. My breath caught in my throat as I stared up at him. He was completely nude which was his preferred means of sleeping while I was in a barely there night gown. I could feel every part of him on me and I swallowed deeply. I opened my mouth to speak but no words would come out.

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"Use your words, baby," Ryker teased and I had to squeeze my thighs together. His eyes tracked the movement and he leaned down to kiss me softly. I moaned against his mouth and the corner of his lips quirked up into a small smile. "You're awfully responsive today."

My cheeks heated and I tried to look away but he grabbed my chin and forced me to look at him.

"Eyes on me, love, I want to see you. I can't remember the last time I just saw you without all the added drama," he pressed a kiss to the side of my lips before trailing down my jaw. "You are absolutely stunning."

He punctuated each word with another kiss until he got to my collarbone and by then, I.

was already squirming against him. He smiled against my skin, delighted with himself that he was able to elicit such a reaction out of me. On a normal day, I would have turned the tables on him but I was far too turned on to think about that. I just wanted to feel him everywhere and he knew it, that was exactly why he was taking his precious time.

"Ryker," I moaned when his lips began to trail down my collarbone.

"Relax, love, I know," his lips ghosted over my nipples and my back arched off the bed. The nightgown was made of the softest silk and I could feel every move he made almost more intensely because of the friction.

He did the same to the other breast before closing his mouth over my nipples. The warmth of his tongue combined with the friction of the gown and I could have sworn that I could come from that alone. It had been so long and I hadn't

realized how long due to how stressed out we both were. His free hand moved up to tweak my other nipple and I couldn't stop my hands from gripping onto his shoulders for dear life.

"Do you want me to take it off?" he asked and I nodded. Words had failed me in that moment and I knew all I would be able to produce would be unintelligible moans. "I need an answer, Camilla, a nod doesn't count."

"Yes- oh," I moaned when he grazed his teeth over the stiff peak.

That seemed to be enough answer for him because he pulled off me long enough to slip the gown over my head and toss it to the side. I was completely nude underneath and I saw Ryker's eyes roam my figure. There was pure hunger in them, he stared at me like he was a starving man and I was his last meal, like I was the ticket standing between him and paradise.

"I want to take my time with you," he said more to himself than to me as he placed a kiss between the valley of my breasts. "I want to feel you, I want to hold you, f uck, I love you, baby."

My voice was choked with emotion as I spoke. "I love you too."

He leaned down to kiss me slowly which was a stark contrast from the fervor he had been using to touch me all morning. As he kissed me, he trailed his hands down my body, down to my ass cheeks where he squeezed and up to my breast. He twirled a nipple between his fingers and I moaned. I couldn't stop myself from rocking my hips and I hissed when I felt him hard as rock beneath me.

Ryker cursed. "F uck, baby, if you do that, this will be over faster than either of us want it to."

I could barely hear his words over the thick fog of lust that was swirling around us. I rocked my hips again this time making sure to slide my wetness over his length. His

head bumped my clit and I bit down on my bottom lip to smother a moan.

Ryker grabbed my hips and I expected him to stop me but he only guided me better so that I was coating him with my juices. With each thrust, I was left a moaning mess. I could feel pressure building in my lower belly and just as my orgasm was about to hit, Ryker stopped. I let out a groan of protest and tried to move but his hands were firm on my hips.

"You're not going to cum from dry humping my leg, baby. You're either going to cum with my dick inside of you or my fingers," he punctuated the last word by spearing two fingers inside of me. My back arched on instinct and when he flicked my clit, I came all over him.

It was so intense especially since he kept pumping his fingers inside of me despite my orgasm wracking through me. He leaned down to capture one of

my nipples and sucked hard prolonging the or asm. By the time I managed to get down from my high, I couldn't speak. No words would have been able to perfectly articulate what had just happened. I would have thought that should be enough but Ryker didn't show any signs of stopping soon. His fingers still moved inside of me and he was content with placing open mouthed kisses all over my torso.

"Ryker," I moaned and I felt him smile against my skin. "Please, I-"

He stopped immediately so he could look me in the eye. "What do you need, baby? Tell me and I'll give it to you."

My cheeks heated as I tried to get the last words out. "I want to make you feel good. You make this all about me."

"Because making you feel good makes me feel good. If you can give me two more or ga sms, baby, then I will be the happiest man in the world," he ended his statement with a small peck on my lips. "Do you feel good?" I nodded trying not to squirm at the fullness of his fingers inside of me despite him not moving. "Then that is all that matters."

He kissed down my torso until he got to my opening where his fingers were. His eyes met mine and he kept them locked on me as he covered my core with his mouth. The combination of his fingers and mouth was deadly and it should have been illegal. Ryker had a body made for sin and he knew exactly how to use it. He didn't merely lick me, he devoured me, with his fingers and his tongue, he turned my entire world upside down in a moment..

His lips closed around my clit and he sucked and that was all I needed to come a second time. I was completely boneless at this point and my clit was swollen and sore.

"Can you give me one more?" he asked and I made a small incoherent sound. "You can, do it baby, you can take it."

He lined his cock against my entrance and I hissed. I was so wet there that he was able to slide in with one thrust. My core pulsed as I felt the fullness of him, my head spun and I could have sworn that I was going to lose my mind. He moved slowly at first, trying to gauge my reaction with each thrust before he began to pick up the pace. I thought I was done for the day but my body had other thoughts because with each thrust, I felt myself come alive again. My walls clamped around him as his hips grazed my clit and he hissed.

"You feel so good, baby," he moaned against my ear. "F uck, so good and perfect, you were made for me, weren't you?"

"Yes," I couldn't help but agree. "Only for you."

His hands wrapped around my throat and he pulled me up for a dizzying kiss that had my toes curling. I pulled back when I needed to catch my breath but

he kept his lips hovering over mine so that we were inhaling the same-breath. "I love you," he whispered as I felt that familiar pressure building for a third time this morning. "More than you can ever know." I responded with a moan. "Come for me, baby."

His hips grazed my clit on the next thrust and that was all it took for me to comply with his order. Two thrusts later and he was emptying himself inside of me.

## **The Rejected Werewolf Princess by Didiadeyemi Chapter 145**

### Chapter 145

There was a nagging voice at the back of my head telling me, I should be more productive with my day but then again, that voice had always been there. Unlike most children, I never got the luxury of lazy days and doing nothing. I was always on the move, there was always something I didn't do right or something I needed to learn with my father. It was almost like I was on a never ending ride most times and despite my father being gone for more years than I would like to consider, I still couldn't shake off the effects of some of the things he had done to me.

I sat up in bed as I watched Camilla who walked around our bedroom with nothing but the sheets wrapped around her body. Her hair was in a mess but it fell loosely down her back just the way I liked it. I knew she wasn't doing it deliberately to tease me but I wanted nothing more than to pull it off her and bend her over the desk she was standing in front of. As if she read my mind, she stilled and turned to me.

"Stop," she warned me and I innocently raised a brow. "I know what you're thinking, stop it. We just got cleaned, you can't get us dirty again."

"I can't?" I asked in almost a challenge and she shot me a bland and unimpressed look. "I wasn't even doing anything, Camilla. I was just staring at my mate. Is that such a problem?"

"It is when I'm trying to be productive and you want us to just sit inside all day doing nothing."

"I don't want to do nothing, I want to bend you over and fuck you until we are both too tired to move," her breath caught in her throat at my words and her eyes darkened considerably. She opened her mouth presumably to respond but just as I had expected, no words could come out. "Is there something you would like to say?"

She shook her head. I rose from my spot on the bed and made my way over



to her. I was wearing just breeches as I made my way over to her. Her breathing increased rapidly with each step I took and by the time I was standing between her and the desk, I was unsure if she was even breathing anymore. I reached up and tucked a strand of hair behind her ears and she gasped loudly.

The corner of my lips tipped up at her reaction. I liked when she was on edge like this, not knowing exactly what I had planned and what my next move was going to be. Every cell in her body was alive as she waited for my next move. I could see that her hand gripping the sheets was shaking and I gently covered it with mine.

“Ryker,” she warned but I simply ignored her. IF she wanted me to stop, she would have said it by now. The fact that she was only saying my name was more than enough of an indicator that she wanted me..

“I’m not doing anything,” I told her simply as I finally closed the gap between us. She molded perfectly against me just like she always did and I murmured a silent thank you to the goddess for hand crafting the most perfect person I had ever laid eyes on and giving her to me. “I just want to kiss you, can I do that?”

She nodded. Normally, I would have asked her to use her words but I was too impatient. I leaned down and closed the gap between us. It was soft and gentle and the moment her hands left the sheets, I pulled back.

“If I keep doing that, we’re not leaving this room,” I whispered against her lips. “As much as I would like that, you need to eat and I don’t think our kids would appreciate being left alone.”

She blinked back the arousal as my words settled. Her cheeks were a light hue of pink and the truth was that I wanted to finish what we had started but her stomach grumbled loud and I knew I had made the right choice.

We both got changed and I made her leave her hair down as we left. The dining room was practically empty seeing as we were more than three hours late for breakfast. The maids were still around and had our meals in front of us within minutes.

“This feels different but in a good way,” Camilla spoke first. “When do we ever have a normal breakfast?”

“Almost never, you’re right, I love this.”

She reached out for me with her left hand and I wasted no time in intertwining our fingers. There were many reasons I loved being ambidextrous and this was one of them. I kept her hand in mine through breakfast and it gave me immense pride to know that she had no idea what I had planned for us after. Christine and the girls were already getting ready as we ate and I wondered how she would react to the news.

“What are you thinking?” she asked after a beat of silence and I turned to her. “I can see the wheels in your head turning. Do you ever shut them off? I haven’t seen you relax in forever.”

“I am relaxing right now.”

She rolled her eyes at me. “You know exactly what I mean, Ryker. We are meant to be having breakfast and your mind is somewhere else completely. Are you sure that

“I’m positive, I was just thinking about some work I might have to check on,” I lied and she frowned.

“You have work right now?” she asked and I nodded. “I guess the life of a royal never ends. Can you at least promise to be done early? I was actually having fun.”

I kissed her softly. “I promise. Why don’t you go for training with Loris after this and once you are done, you can come find me?”

“Fine, you have a deal.”

She left soon after and I immediately went looking for Christine. I found her in Audrey’s room in front of a three suitcases. One was larger than the other and at first, I thought it was hers but on closer inspection, I realized that it was filled with baby things.

“Did you get her out?” she asked me and I nodded. “Okay, I’ll need an hour at least to finish packing for her.”

“I made things easier for you, I arranged a few of her things by the edge of the closet. You can just put them in the suitcase.”

“Alright then, thank you,” she made her way out the door before stopping.

“She is going to love this, I promise you?”

She left after that leaving me with my daughters who were peering at me with wide eyes. Audrey announced that she was bored first and I knew I had less than ten minutes to do something interesting before I was on the edge of a possible tantrum. I offered to read a book with her but she didn’t want that. After a minute of deliberating, she announced that she wanted to take a walk but she didn’t want to walk, she wanted to be carried. That was how I ended up walking through the halls of the palace carrying two little girls.

I wasn’t complaining though, I never would. I loved my girls more than life itself and if it meant carrying them around the palace for hours just to amuse them, then I was more than willing to do so. We walked to the private living room and back. On our way back, I bumped into Juan. He looked like he was searching for someone and it didn’t take a mind reader to know that it was Christine.

“She’s doing something for me,” I told him and he nodded in understanding.

“You have the next few days alone with her. Camilla and I are leaving for a

short vacation.”

His brows furrowed in confusion. “Why are you telling me this?”

“Because if you’re going to win her over then now would be the time.”

I didn’t know what was going through his head as he looked from me to the girls in my arms and back to me.

“Thank you,” it came out sounding more like a question. “Why are you helping me though?”

“I’m not doing it for you, I’m doing it for her. The best that happens is she agrees to be with you and the worst is that she tosses you out on your ass. I don’t care which way it goes as long as she is happy.”

“Aunt Christine likes flowers,” Audrey announced suddenly, “and she likes chocolate but she doesn’t eat it much because she thinks it makes her fat. She also really likes water and snow.”

He gave her a soft smile. “Thank you for that. I’ll make sure to get her all the flowers that I can.”

Audrey straight up fucking giggled and my eyes narrowed. Did she have a baby crush on Juan?

Before I could say anything however, I saw Camilla making her way back down the halls. As soon as she saw me, relief poured through her features and she made her way over.

Juan sighted her and smiled. “I think this is my cue to leave, thank ad you too Audrey.”

you for  
your advice,

He walked away just as Camilla made her way over. Her eyes followed him with an almost questioning look and I shrugged. It wasn’t an important conversation and not one that needed to be repeated.

“I went to your office but you weren’t there,” she said to me as she kissed both girls on their foreheads. “Hey, Audrey, how are you?”

“I’m good, I was telling the nice man to get flowers for aunt Christine.”

“That’s awfully nice of you,” she turned to me. “What’s going on? I tried to get into the room but Christine told me there was a problem and they were trying to fix it. Is everything okay?”

“It is nothing to worry about,” I tried to assure her but I could tell that she wasn’t willing to let it go that easily.

“Tell me what’s wrong, is it bad?”

I knew there was no use keeping it a secret from her anymore especially since

she was freaking out already. “We’re going to your father’s vacation house for the next three days.”

## **The Rejected Werewolf Princess by Didiadeyemi Chapter 146-148**

Chapter 146

CAMILLA’S P.O.V

I was stunned to say the least. Ryker had already arranged everything and all that was left was for us to leave. To be honest, we did need a vacation and I was meaning to get to it but I didn’t expect him to already plan everything. It was just going to be us as a family and as the carriage drove off from the palace, I couldn’t help but bounce my feet eagerly. Audrey was sitting opposite us while Aurora was comfortably lying in Ryker’s arms.

“Where are we going, mummy?” Audrey asked making me turn to her. “It looks like the same road we went through with aunt Christine.”

I had somehow forgotten about that trip and how badly it ended. I cursed when I realized how worried she might be. I sat beside her and held her small hand in mine. She wasted no time in squeezing my hand as she looked out of the window watching and searching. I knew the vampires weren’t an issue anymore but she was a child, I couldn’t dismiss her fear especially since I had no idea what they faced.

“It is, but we are safe this time, I promise you,” I assured her and I could tell she wanted to believe me but she was still worried. “Do you want me to close the curtains? Maybe if you don’t look outside then you’ll feel better.”

“I’m scared,” she whispered and I felt my heart shatter as I pulled her close to my chest. I placed a soft kiss on her head and tucked her underneath my arm. “You’ll protect us right, daddy?”

“With my life,” Ryker didn’t hesitate before answering. “You have nothing to worry about.”

The curtains remained drawn for the remainder of the trip and Audrey calmed down enough to fall asleep. I couldn’t help but hope that she stayed sleeping until we got to the house. I didn’t want her worrying and I knew there was no way to stop her from doing that. No words were exchanged between Ryker and I, we didn’t need to speak, all it took was one glance from the other person to know what was wrong and what needed to be said.

“She’ll be fine,” I told him and he just hummed. “She’s young, there is a possibility that she will forget about this when she is older. Even if she doesn’t completely forget, it will be a distant memory. We have peace with the vampires for now and hopefully it lasts throughout their lifetime as well. She is

safe.”

“I know that, I just hate that it is even a problem for her. She is so young and she has faced so much. It is a miracle that she is still standing here. There was a reason I never wanted children, I didn’t want any until I was sure that I could protect them from

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everything. I will never regret my girls but what good am I as a parent if I cannot keep them safe?”

“You have kept them safe, despite everything thrown at us, they are alive and they are happy, that is all we can ask for as parents,” I spoke softly so as not to rouse the girls. “We cannot always protect them from everything but we have done everything in our power to keep them safe, we have tried our best and that has to be enough. You are a great father to these girls.”

Sometimes our best isn’t enough, Camilla, they depend on us for everything.” I sighed. “Be that as it may, you protected them from things that you didn’t even cause. Frederick was not your fault and neither were the vampires. We inherited the sins of our parents and we paid for them.”

“I wasn’t talking about that, I was referring to Alara,” he looked up at me. “I brought Alara into their lives. She could have hurt them and we would never have been able to figure it out. What good am I if I am unable to keep them safe?”

I was about to respond when the carriage lurched to a halt. My spine straightened and I looked at Ryker to see that he was just as confused as I looked. Audrey stirred next to me at the sudden stop.

“Are we there yet?” she mumbled but I quickly kissed her forehead.

“No, sweetheart, go back to sleep,” I adjusted her so that she was leaning against the window and grabbed the handle of the carriage but Ryker grabbed my arm.

“What are you thinking?”

“I want to investigate.”

“Are you insane?” he all but spat. “We don’t know what is out there. Why would you even think about going there?”

“You can come with if you want,” I winked at him before pulling the door open and stepping out. The coachman was by my side as soon as he saw me.

“What is going on?”

“There was just an old lady, some of her wares scattered in the middle of the

road. If we tried to pass, we would have damaged them.”

Ryker got out behind me and I smiled at him before making my way to the front of the carriage. He muttered something under his breath that sounded suspiciously like ‘goddess help me’ but I was barely paying attention to him. Scattered in front of the road just like the coachman had said were bundles of firewood, baskets of herbs and a bunch of other trinkets/that I couldn’t identify.

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I sighted the old woman struggling to load them all into a small cart and I couldn’t stop myself from helping her. She didn’t notice me at first until I took one of the firewood bundles to her cart. Her eyes widened as she took me in. “Your majesty,” she bowed low but I was quick to stop her. As soon as I put my hands on her shoulders to steady her, I felt a pulse run through my blood. I didn’t know how but I immediately knew that it had something to do with my healing powers. It was almost like there was something inside of her that called out to my powers, something inside of her that needed to be healed. I could feel the tug almost as if it was fighting to get out of me and into her. I immediately snatched my hand back.

Ryker was behind me with his hands at my waist. “Are you alright?”

I nodded then turned back to the old woman. “Are you by any chance ill?”

I knew it was an out of pocket question and she blinked at me carefully before bowing her head in shame. “How did you know, your majesty? Has it began to spread to my features?”

“What ails you?”

“I don’t know. It took my mother and my grandmother. It is a miracle I managed to live this long. The physicians say there is nothing they can do. It ails the women in my family. Alas I lived a long and full life and I bore only sons. The ailment will die with me.”

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gave her a sad smile. “Good luck.”

“I wish you the same, your majesty.”

She bowed and dragged her cart across the road. Ryker was still looking between us in confusion and as soon as we got into the carriage, I explained what had happened. I didn’t know how to describe it because it had never happened to me but I did the best that I could. By the time I was done, he just stared at me.

“Is that perhaps part of your powers?” he asked and I cocked my head to the side in confusion. “Everything is supposed to have a downside, is it not? You have two powers instead of one, perhaps that could be the disadvantage. When you touch people, your powers are drawn to their ailments.”

“It would make sense but I wouldn’t know until I touch someone else who has an ailment. I spend most of my time in the palace,” I ran my hands through my hair with a sigh. “Do you think we should try it out?”

“I think it can wait. We came here to relax, we can worry about all of this much later, okay?” I nodded. I reached out for his hand and he squeezed. “We should be arriving at

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the house soon.”

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We were on the road for another twenty minutes before the carriage pulled to another stop. This time, it was the coachman who opened the door for us. I gently roused Audrey from sleep who looked like she was going to fall over if she took a step on her own so I carried Aurora while Ryker took her.

I didn’t know what I was expecting when I heard about the vacation house but it was not a two-story stone house complete with a garden by the side, trimmed vines growing up on the walls, a massive space around it and a lake to the side. I could have sworn I heard horses as well. A little distance over to the left was a much smaller house that I immediately knew was for the staff and the guards. It was amazing that this place existed and my mother never spoke of it.

As we got inside, I soon realized why. There was no sign on the inside that she had ever been here, it looked more to me like a bachelor pad than anything. It seemed like the kind of place he would go when he had enough of the palace. The inside resembled a simple townhouse, it reminded me of some of the houses I had seen back at Tyson’s pack. There was a large fireplace in the center of the living room and a massive kitchen.

“This is beautiful,” I whispered aloud and Ryker couldn’t help but hum in agreement.

“Welcome to the manor,” a voice behind us spoke and I nearly jumped. I turned to see a butler standing there complete in a black set and a white shirt underneath. “I am Mr. Biggs and it is an honor to serve you. My father served the late king as I will do with you.”

Ryker snapped out of his haze first. “It is a pleasure to meet you.”

Mr. Biggs smiled.

“There are a total of five bedrooms and all your things will be brought in and taken to the rooms. There is a garden out back and a horse ranch if you ever feel the need to ride. The late king also had a private room where he kept all his antique game sets including a very beautiful hand carved chess set.”

I was impressed, I didn't know my father played chess.

\*The cook will have the meal ready in an hour. Would you like me to take you to your rooms now?”

## Chapter 147

### CAMILLA'S P.O.V

The rooms were larger than I expected and I was slowly coming to the reality that my father didn't do anything half as sed. This may have been his getaway but he didn't spare any expense in trying to make things as comfortable as possible. There were crystal chandeliers and marble tables. It was amazing what money could do.

We all got cleaned and changed into fresh clothes. It felt good to not have the weight of the palace on my shoulders and to be able to focus on myself and my family. There was something different about the air here. It felt like for the first time in my life, I could finally breathe

The cook was a beautiful middle aged woman with dark hair and kind eyes.

There was something about the way she moved that led me to assume that in her prime, she was a force to be reckoned with. She said she had been working since my father built the place and to be honest, I could see why. If she was one of his mistresses, I wouldn't be too surprised.

After dinner, I saw Ryker and Audrey whispering to each other while I was feeding Aurora. After a minute of avid conversation and hand waving, she rushed over to me. She had her puppy dog face down to a pat as she gazed up at me with wide eyes. I couldn't hide my smile as I pretended not to realize that she was trying to butter me up for something that she knew I was going to say no to.

“Mummy, can we go play by the lake?” she asked and I raised my brow. I glanced over at the window wanting to be sure that it was open and she could see how dark it was getting. “I asked daddy but he said I should ask you. We don't even have to go to the water.”

“It's late, Audrey, I don't think we should be around a body of water when neither of us can keep a close eye on you,” I explained and she pouted. I sighed knowing she was getting that lake one way or the other so I opted for a compromise. “Why don't we go tomorrow? We can sit by the fireplace tonight and daddy can tell stories.”



She weighed it for a second as if trying to figure out whether or not I was ripping her off. She was so dramatic as she put her finger to her temple as if it would help her think harder or better. After a long/minute of deliberation, she turned back to me.

“Can we also put a big blanket on the floor and sleep there?” she asked and I thought about it.

We couldn't let Aurora sleep on the floor, she would need a crib and unless we dragged it out of the nursery that Ryker carefully erected, we would have to leave her upstairs. I was about to refuse but then I glanced over at Audrey again. She was a good older sister

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and she had never once protested about the amount of time we spent with Aurora. She deserved some alone time with us as well so I nodded. That seemed to be more than enough for her because she smiled wide.

“I'll go grab the book,” she rushed up the stairs and I watched her go.

I was so busy watching her that I didn't realize Ryker had come up to me until he placed his hands on my shoulder. I leaned back into his hold while he just stood there silently. The maids had returned to their quarters and Mr. Biggs who was the only person that actually slept on the property had returned to his room for the night.

“Do you want me to burp her after?” he asked and I nodded. I wanted nothing more than to just lie down and forget about everything. “What do you think of the place so far?”

“Honestly, I think it's amazing. It belonged to my father so I'm sure there are a lot of secrets to be uncovered here and I'm not sure if I want to spend most of my time relaxing or trying to figure out what he could be hiding here.”

“We could do both but it might be a bit difficult seeing as we have two kids to watch over but if anyone can do it, it's us,” he joked and I couldn't stop the small laugh that bubbled out of me. “What is Audrey doing, she should be here by now?”

As if on cue, she rushed in with not one but three different books. She placed them all on the table looking nothing short of pleased with herself. I glanced at Ryker who seemed just as shocked as I was. When I asked her to go, I wasn't expecting this.

“Why don’t you get ready for bed while I burp the baby,” he took Aurora from my arms. “Good luck.”

It was more fun than either of us expected it to be. There was a small part of me that felt like a child again in front of that fireplace. By the time Audrey and I returned, Aurora was already asleep and Zade changed into his own night set. He offered to read the book despite me telling him how I could do it. I sat in between his legs with my back pressed up against him while Audrey sat in between mine.

She fell asleep first and while she was sleeping, Ryker and I decided to sit up for a little while longer and I wasn’t sure when I fell asleep because the next thing I heard was Ryker’s soft voice as he spoke to Aurora. He was walking around the living room with her and I realized two things. The first was that it was morning and the second was that I was lying under blankets next to Audrey.

“How long have you been awake?” I asked making Ryker’s steps falter for a second. He turned to me as I stood up slowly and made my way over to him.

“Why didn’t you wake me up?”

“I was already asleep when she started crying. Waking you up would have served no

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purpose other than to bother you,” he kissed my temple softly. “The cook is already in preparing breakfast. Should we wake her up or should we just let her sleep in?”

I glanced over at Audrey who he was referring to. “Just let her sleep, she deserves it after everything that happened. Besides. I need to speak to Mr. Briggs and find out what we need before going to the lake. She will remember when she wakes up and start asking.”

We split up after that leaving Audrey to sleep. I found Mr. Briggs outside by the garden and he was more than happy to answer my questions and even offered to get a picnic basket filled for our trip to the lake. He told me that the lake was one of my father’s favorite places and I tried to hide the disappointment on hearing that. I knew it was illogical but a part of me was pissed at the man. He was long dead but he had caused so much before he died.

I tried to push every thought of him away from mind as I focused on getting back to my family. I thanked Mr. Briggs for his help and I couldn’t help but

notice that he seemed genuinely happy to be working and I couldn't help but wonder if it got lonely out here and if they had family. I filed that into the back of my mind and made sure to ask about it later.

By the time I got back in, Audrey was already awake. We ate breakfast together and she waited until she had gotten dressed for the day before she asked about the lake again. I shot Ryker a look as if to say 'you see what I mean' but thankfully, Mr. Briggs was ready with the basket. Audrey practically skipped the entire way to the lake and I couldn't help but wonder what exactly about the lake was so appealing to her.

Blankets had been set on the ground along with a picnic table by the side. It was a warm day and Audrey practically rolled in the grass. It was almost like I was seeing her be a child for the first time. In the place, she was expected to have a certain level of composure as the princess but here, she could just be a child. She could run around and chase butterflies with her father behind her and lie face first on the grass.

I chose to lie down on one of the chairs that was situated under a tree for shade. Aurora was lying peacefully on my chest and she was happily gurgling and trying to reach for my hair. I watched everything that was happening and couldn't help but realize just how lucky I was to be able to get this time.

Audrey squealed loudly as Ryker threw her over his shoulder and my eyes snapped to them but something behind them caught my attention.

I sat up almost immediately unsettling Aurora who made a small sound of protest in her throat. I picked her up and rubbed her back absent mindedly as I made my way over to where Ryker and Audrey were playing.

Audrey saw me first and she smiled. "Are you coming to join us?"

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"Not right now, sweetheart," I told her not taking my eyes off what was in front of me.

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I got to the front of the tree and ran my fingers down the bark. The markings were intricate and although they were old, the writing on it was clear. Ryker must have noticed that I was staring fixatedly at something because I felt his presence behind me.

"What's wrong?" he asked and his eyes found the markings because he made a small sound of surprise. "It's just a name, your father's name. This is his

property.”

“I don’t know about you but the late king doesn’t sound like a juvenile who carves his name into trees for nothing. It is so small that anyone could have missed it. It is almost as if he was trying to hide it.”

“Why would he want to do that? What are you thinking?”

I sighed as I turned back to him. “I think there is something here.”Chapter 148  
CAMILLA’S P.O.V

Ryker convinced me that it would be a better idea to dig it up after we put the kids to sleep so I anxiously waited until night time. It was difficult considering my skin was itching and brimming with anticipation. I badly wanted to know what hidden there. As annoying as my father’s past tended to be, his hunts had proven to be a worthy challenge. If they had come at another time preferably when an enemy wasn’t breathing down my neck then I would have enjoyed it more. My only prayer as we waited was that it wasn’t going to be the start to another enemy that he somehow managed to piss off.

Once both kids were asleep in their own beds and I had kissed their foreheads, Ryker and I rushed outside with a lamp and a shovel that we found in the storage room. We settled in front of the tree and while I was brimming with excitement, Ryker was just there because of me.

“You don’t have to be here,” I whispered to him but he ignored me. “I know it is late and we might not find anything. I wouldn’t want to keep you out so long.”

“Shut up, Camilla,” his voice held no bite and a small smile pulled at the corner of his lips. “I want to be here, I want to help you. If you want to spend the entire night searching then I will. I don’t care if we find anything or not as long as I get to spend the day with you.”

My cheeks heated and tears burned the back of my eyes. I wanted to kiss him, I wanted to hold him. He was my mate and he was here with me. Ryker was a better man than most and I knew without a doubt that I did not deserve him. He was a better man than me but I couldn’t imagine being with anyone else. After everything that life had thrown at me, Ryker was the start of everything good that had come into my life. From him, I got my amazing children.

I held the lamp while we investigated. There was no indication as to where anything could be buried so we settled for just digging at the base of the tree. I offered to do it but Ryker simply rolled his eyes at me and went to work. It was very late and the night sky was devoid of stars. He dug for a few minutes

before his shovel finally hit something. Ryker pulled it out and I was surprised to see a small hand carved wooden box. It had intricate designs on it and had a keyhole but there was no key.

“Well this was a waste of time,” he drawled as he tossed the shovel to the side. “Save for us breaking it, I don’t think there is any other way that we can open it up.”

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“I don’t want to break it,” I said immediately.

“Why would your father leave a box without a key? Is it another clue for something else hidden elsewhere?” he asked as we looked over the box, “I don’t think so. I think this is it, whatever it is.”

He handed it over to me and I stared at it shocked by how beautiful it was. The designs were precise as if they were done by a professional. It would have probably cost a pretty penny.

“It looks beautiful. I wonder if he carved it himself.”

“I believe he did,” I nearly jumped when I heard Mr. Briggs’ voice behind me. “I apologize if I scared you. I heard some noise and saw the light and came to investigate. I always wondered where that box disappeared to.”

“You know it?” I asked and he nodded. “When?”

“I remember seeing the late king carving it one afternoon at least fifteen years ago. I had completely forgotten about it if I am being honest. I never asked what it was for and I never saw it again. It is a sight to behold. He was a talented man but he didn’t like to show it. As far as I know, the king was brilliant.”

“You speak very highly of him.”

“He was my king and he spent a lot of time here. There were times his façade would slip and I would see the real man underneath.”

His words held a double meaning, almost as if they were aimed at me. I

wondered if that was his way of telling me to give the thoughts about my father a second chance but I chose to brush it away. I didn't care about that so I decided to change the subject.

"Do you know where he could have kept the key?" I asked but he shook his head.

"The king was a private man, more than anyone I ever knew and I was just his butler. He wouldn't have told me even if I had asked but knowing him, he probably left clues as to where he could find it. He had a thing for treasure hunts and once told me that he hid so many things in life that he always left a clue on where to find them should he forget. I am sure you will see something."

"Thank you, we might be out for a while."

"Of course," he bowed. "Have a wonderful night, your majesty."

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He turned on his heels and walked away leaving Ryker and I alone. Ryker watched his retreating figure with rapt attention and concern. I wanted to ask what it was that he saw that caused his haunches to rise but I chose to stay silent and just observe carefully. It wasn't until Briggs disappeared that Ryker finally turned back to me.

"He was lying," he said simply and I raised a brow. "Not about everything, he was lying when he spoke about your father. When he said he was just the butler, he looked away, it was obvious that he wasn't telling the truth. He knows more than he is letting on. Perhaps he and your father were even friends."

I looked back at the direction he had gone through. "It could be a possibility but we can handle that later, we have to find the key."

It is late, Camilla, we can always come back tomorrow morning when the sun is up. For now, I think it is best if we called it a night, don't you?"

I hadn't realized just how tired I was until he started speaking. I sighed and nodded in agreement. We covered up the area we had dug together and took the box back into the house with us. The key could even be somewhere on the box, I just needed a clear head and the light of the morning to observe it properly.

Ryker went to wash his hands while I changed into my nightgown. I didn't

even realize he had returned and was standing by the door of the room until I turned back. I jumped and my heart pound wildly in my chest when I noticed him watching me.

“You scared me,” I whispered with my hand over my chest and instead of apologizing, he just hummed and walked over to me. He has gotten rid of his shirt and was just wearing pants. “What’s wrong?”

“You’re enjoying yourself, right?” he asked and I immediately nodded.

“Of course I am, why wouldn’t I be?”

“Well because it seems like we are about to go on one of your father’s treasure hunts and I don’t want it to get in the way of our time off. I don’t want anything with the potential to stress you out.”

I sighed and closed the distance between us. I cupped his cheeks with both hands and placed a soft kiss on his lips. It was meant to be a peck but Ryker had other plans because he wrapped his arms around my waist and pulled me impossibly closer to him until our skin was flush against each other. He groaned into my mouth as he deepened the kiss and just that sound had me growing impossibly wetter.

By the time he pulled back I was panting for breath and my entire body was alight with

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pleasure. His lips were swollen and he ran his thumb across his bottom lip as he watched me as if there was something I was supposed to say. I couldn’t even remember the conversation we were having before. I wanted him inside of me immediately but something told me we were talking about something important before.

“What were we saying?” I cleared my throat and asked. Ryker just smiled softly to himself.

“It doesn’t matter, I already got my answer.”

I woke up to an empty bed the next morning and just as I was about to get out of bed, my door opened to reveal Audrey and Ryker behind her. Ryker had a tray of food in his hands while Audrey was holding a small glass of what looked like orange juice.

“We brought you breakfast,” she exclaimed and I couldn’t stop my smile. “Do you like it?”

“I love it,” I laughed softly. “Thank you so much.” She climbed into bed next to me after placing the glass on the counter and I kissed her forehead. “I assume this was your idea, right?”

She giggled. “It was daddy but I helped. I helped a lot.”

“Well then, thank you so much,” I looked up at Ryker who had placed the tray on the bedside table. He grabbed my chin with one hand and kissed me deeply making Audrey giggle. She was watching us with wide eyes and an ear splitting grin.

“That’s so weird,” she exclaimed. “Why do you do that?”

I realized she was talking to Ryker so I allowed him respond. He hesitated for a second before responding. “Because I love her and that is one way you show people that you love them.”

Her brows furrowed in confusion so I decided to step in. “When you grow older and you find your mate, he will do it too.”

Her nose crinkled. “No, thank you. I don’t want anyone touching me. Men are gross and Maya says that they have germs.”

I couldn’t help but laugh. She was four years old and already talking about boys and germs. I didn’t know whether to be impressed or shocked. It was a mixture of both but Ryker seemed to be filled with all degrees of happiness. He had a satisfied smirk on his face and nodded.

“Good girl,” Ryker whispered as he kissed her forehead. “You’re too good for any man.

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Stay away from them until you’re forty.”

I shot my mate a glare and he simply raised his hands in mock surrender.

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After breakfast, I went to Aurora and fed her before carrying her outside for



some fresh air while I burped her. I didn't realize I was going towards the lake until I found myself in front of that same tree again. I looked around wondering if there would be something else but there was nothing.

"Back so soon?" this time I didn't jump because I had already sensed his presence. I didn't even turn back and just waited for Briggs to make his way to my side. He was staring at the tree with a sense of longing and sadness.

"Why did you lie?" I asked and he stilled. "He was your friend, why did you say he was just your butler?"

He opened his mouth to speak then sighed deeply. "Being friends with a butler would have been the scandal of the century and your father knew it. I wasn't always a butler, I was a lowly maid in the palace but we bonded and I saw past the asshole prince who couldn't keep his dick in his pants."

I couldn't help but laugh at that. "I'm sure you told him that at least once."

"I made sure to tell him every chance I could get," he winked at me and I smiled. "He was a good man, he just made some very stupid decisions. I loved your father and it was almost like he knew when things were coming to an end. He spent more time writing, almost as if he didn't want to forget anything. He carved this box and although he didn't tell me, I saw him bury it. I don't know where he kept the key."

"It's alright, you don't have to explain," I opened my mouth to say more but I heard Ryker call out to me. "I should probably go before he starts looking for me."

"He loves you," he said simply and I nodded. I knew it was true. "I only saw your father look at one woman that way."

"Eva? I know about her and her son. He proved to be a real pain in my ass if I am being honest."

He snorted. "Not Eva, she was nothing but a distraction for him, not that I am supporting what he did. I never liked her if I am being honest and I made sure to tell him that but your father was as stubborn as nails and he wouldn't listen to me."

He shook his head almost as if he was remembering something fond,

"There was a girl when he was younger, she was a commoner and your father was

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## The Rejected Werewolf Princess by Didiadeyemi Chapter 149

Chapter 149

CAMILLA'S P.O.V

I felt a shudder go through me as I let out a ragged breath. My knees buckled beneath me and the only thought going through my head was of my daughter who was in my arms and how I didn't want to drop her. I didn't even realize when Ryker instantly appeared by my side and took her from me. I fell to my knees momentarily dislodging Briggs' hold on me and I gasped at the sudden relief. I wasn't sure how many seconds had passed since Briggs put his hands on me but it felt like an eternity.

"Are you alright?" he reached out for me but I brushed off his touch a bit too harshly. "Was it something I did? Do you need me to bring something for you?"

I knew he wasn't the cause of the issue, he looked more confused than I had ever see anyone but I wasn't going to risk that kind of rush again. I felt like I was going to pass out if it happened again. I tried to pull myself to my feet but I couldn't even stand. My limbs felt like jelly and it was almost like I had lost all control of my body.

"No, I'm," I stopped to catch my breath. My heart was pounding wildly in my chest and there was a sheen of sweat on my brow. "Are you ill?"

He looked taken aback by my question. I realized it was a weird thing to ask someone especially considering the context. There were a million ways it could have been taken but I didn't care enough to do small talk. I needed to know what was causing all of this and how to stop it. I needed to know if there was a way that I could shut it off.

"That is a very out of pocket question, your majesty," he responded slowly.

"We can focus on my health at a later time when you don't look so sick. There is a physician in the other quarters. Would you like me to-"

"No," I cut him off and he fell silent. "All I need right now is for you to answer my question as quickly and as honestly as possible."

He looked over at Ryker who had his eyes fixated on me. He looked poised to grab me if anything were to go wrong. Aurora nestled in his hand oblivious to what was going on and for a split second, I couldn't help but imagine what it would be like to be a child again, even if it were just for a few minutes.

"Is it that obvious?" he joked as he rocked on his feet slightly. "I have a condition, it rarely affects wolves seeing as we have a much better immune system than anyone else but I suppose my grandfather is to blame. He was careless in his youth and somehow managed to contract a regenerative disease. It affects our bones and they don't quite get to full strength."

I let out an exasperated breath and decided to test my strength once more by trying to

get to my feet. Ryker was instantly by my side helping me up and I couldn't help but notice that Briggs was still standing away from me as if terrified to touch me now. His explanation offered some insight but it still wasn't enough to understand exactly what was happening to me. A crazy idea formed in my mind and I knew I had to do it quickly before I managed to talk myself out of it. "Is it alright if I try something?" I asked and he nodded. Ryker was by my side and he wrapped his arm around my elbow.

"Are you insane?" he whisper yelled. "You could pass out. This isn't the kind of experiment you should not be trying. What the hell is wrong with you?"

"I'll be fine," I tried to assure him but he shook his head at me. I simply gave him a soft smile. I was going to be fine. I turned to Briggs who was taking in our interaction with careful eyes. "Whatever happens, please do not grab me or you might just make it worse."

"What are you doing, your majesty?" he asked but I didn't respond, I slowly held onto his arm and waited.

I felt the lurch again, this time like a tug in the center of my gut and it was somehow even worse than the last time. It felt like someone had ripped a hole in my center and the power was just flowing freely. I closed my eyes trying and failing to see if there was a way I could clamp the hole shut but no matter what I did, it kept ripping free. It was Ryker who grabbed my arm and pulled me off Briggs.

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"I think that is enough experimenting for an entire day," he sounded a little annoyed and on a normal day, I would have rolled my eyes at him or something but I was exhausted and barely standing. I felt faint and dizzy and I was almost sure that if Ryker moved even an inch away from me, I was going to fall flat on my face.

"Are those part of your powers?" he asked in a soft voice almost as if he didn't want anyone to overhear. "I know about your lineage having powers and I might have seen your father use his a few times but it never had this effect."

"I suppose it likes to manifest differently," I attempted to joke but it turned into a wince when my head began to pound. I let out a groan of pain and all but fell against Ryker who wrapped his arms around my waist to keep me upright.

"Are you sure that she doesn't need anything. She is starting to look green," I knew he was talking to Ryker and not me. I was grateful for that because I wasn't sure if I would be able to stand.

"She's fine," Ryker shut him down immediately. His hands were bound around

my waist and I heard his voice in my head. "Can you stand or walk? I need to take you back in but I have Aurora in my arms."

I couldn't even form a response in my head, that was how weak I was. Ryker must have realized that because he cursed. I faintly heard him converse with Briggs although I couldn't make out the exact words. All I knew was that one minute, I was struggling to remain upright and the very next, I was being lifted into Ryker's arms. I tried to protest but my tongue felt heavy and my head spun. I tried to stay awake but the darkness overtook me and everything went black.

When I woke up, the sun was already starting to set. I sat up straight in the bed keeping a hand on my head that was still pounding furiously. I was alone in the room but Ryker's scent was everywhere and I knew he had left not too long ago. I managed to pull myself out of the bed and dragged my feet into the living room. I had to keep my hand on the wall to keep my balance because I was still out of it.

I heard laughter coming from the kitchen and I immediately recognized it as Audrey's. I found her sitting on the counter while Ryker made funny faces at her as they cooked. Audrey saw me first and she made a sound that was a cross between a scream and a squeal. She leaped from the counter and rushed over to me.

"You're awake," she squealed. "Daddy said that you were resting because you got hurt. Do you feel better?"

"Yes, sweetheart, I do," I leaned down to press a kiss to the mass of curls on her head. "What are you doing?"

"We were trying to make something for you. I wanted to make a cake but dad said no. He said fruits would be better," she scrunched up her nose at that.

"Fruits are boring."

I couldn't stop my laugh at that. "We can get a cake when we go back home, okay?"

That seemed to be a good enough compromise for her because she nodded and dashed out of the kitchen. I wanted to ask where she was going but she was fast and disappeared before I could even get the words out of my mouth. I sighed and turned to Ryker who I realized hadn't taken his eyes off me since I came downstairs. He was watching me intently as if worried that I was going to break. I couldn't blame him considering everything that happened but I couldn't help but feel overwhelmed.

I made my way over to him and simply relaxed my head against his upper arm. He wasted no time in placing a lingering kiss to my temple and just holding me there. His arms always managed to make me feel safe and loved which was exactly what I needed.

“Do you want to explain what happened out there?” he asked but I couldn’t respond. The truth was that I had no answer. I couldn’t tell what happened because the truth was that I didn’t know. “You need to be more careful with this new development. You could have gotten badly hurt. What were you thinking?”

“I just wanted to get a firm grip on what was happening, I’m sorry,” I let out a resigned sigh. “I just don’t understand why this is happening now of all times. Does this mean I

have to avoid touching people now? I thought the healing magic was in my blood.”

“I thought so too but it almost seems like it is growing. It was just in your blood but now it is everywhere and you need to be careful unless you want to live in a plastic bubble for the rest of your life.”

I let out a frustrated groan. I had no idea why things couldn’t just be easy for us. We had to work and fight for everything we had now and yet there were still more problems. It was exhausting and there were moments I just wanted it all to end. I wanted to take a break from living. This was supposed to be a vacation and not another quest to discover my powers- powers I didn’t even ask for.

“They should have left,” I muttered aloud and Ryker turned to me.

“What should have left?”

“My powers- why didn’t they leave?”

“I’m not following, baby,” he crossed his arms over his chest and leaned against the “I’m not following, baby,” he crossed his counter. “You’re going to have to explain this to me.”

“I was told that my powers were meant to even out the balance that Alastair’s bite caused. Everything should have a cure and this was it. But the problem is that Alastair is dead now, there is no more bite. Why didn’t it disappear when he died? Doesn’t this mean that the world is out of balance again?”

“Honestly, Camilla, I don’t know,” he ran his hands through his hair in frustration. “This is incredibly irresponsible of me to say but I think we should file this away for later. The problems aren’t going to disappear, we can always handle them later.”

I wanted to refuse but Audrey came barreling in at that moment. I couldn’t make out what she was saying but she was excited and that seemed to be enough for me. I was going to spend this time with my family and make the most out of it. Ryker was right, I could always face my problems in the future. We had dinner together and we watched with baited breath as Aurora tried to crawl. It was amazing being able to witness these milestones in her life first

hand especially with Ryker here. He missed everything with Audrey and I could tell that he treasured these moments with Aurora. I was incredibly lucky to be blessed with two amazing daughters and I wasn't going to give that up for the world.

Audrey passed out not long after dinner leaving Ryker and I to clean up. He was adamant on doing it himself so I reluctantly let him. I was about to go up to bed when I glanced out of the window and found myself staring at the lake. I glanced over at Ryker in the kitchen before making my way out of the house. He would know where I was and I knew he would come after me.

I didn't know what it was about it but I knew there was something I was yet to figure out. I found myself going back there until I was just standing in front of the tree with my father's name carved into it wondering what it was that I was missing. There had to be more.

I wasn't sure how long I stood there until I felt Ryker's presence behind me.

"What are we looking at?"

I nearly jumped but his hand was on my waist holding me in place and calming me. He placed a soft kiss on my shoulder blade and inhaled deeply. I couldn't help but lean back into his arms and let my head fall against his chest.

"I don't know," I admitted. "I just feel like we are missing something important. Why would he keep the box here and not the key? That doesn't make sense."

"Maybe the key got lost or maybe he put it somewhere else because he never wanted it to be opened," he offered but I shook my head. My father was more careful than that. There was no way he would allow it to get missing. "It's night, Camilla and it is cold, what you need right now is a warm bed."

I was going to agree, the response was at the tip of my tongue when I noticed something there. There was a hole at the side of the tree, the kind where squirrels would burrow into. It was dark and I couldn't see into it so I did the next thing I could think of, I stuck my hand inside.

"Are you insane?" Ryker asked. "There could be a wild animal in there." I ignored him and felt around. "Camilla please, you could get hurt. We can come back to this in the morning."

I was about to give up when I felt something foreign, it felt like a piece of string. I pulled it out and dusted it off only to scoff. I turned and showed it to Ryker. He looked just as stunned as I felt as he scoffed. He reached out for it almost blindly as if he were shocked at what he was seeing. I wouldn't have blamed him because I was too.

"A key," he breathed.

I nodded. "How much do you want to bet that it fits into that box?"

## The Rejected Werewolf Princess by Didiadeyemi Chapter 150

Chapter 150

CAMILLA'S P.O.V

I couldn't keep my excitement at bay until the next morning, Ryker and I immediately rushed up the stairs and with only a lamp as a source of light, we opened the box. The key fit perfectly and within a second, the box was open. I was terrified for what I would find or not find. It had been buried in the ground for years and there was a possibility that the elements had gotten to the items inside but to my shock, the bound papers were in pristine condition almost as if they had been put there only a few days prior.

I undid the ribbon holding it together and was shocked when I saw that the first letter was addressed to me, not by name though, it read 'to my daughter'. I glanced at Ryker with scrunched eyebrows wondering what to make of it but he simply shrugged. I lifted the lamp to get a closer look at the box in case I had missed something and that was when I saw it. It was scribbled all over the inside of the box as if someone had taken a small carving pen and etched it- a single name. It wasn't one I had ever heard before but it was clearly one that had haunted my father for him to have written it like a prayer.

"Who is Annette?" I asked but Ryker shrugged. "My mother never mentioned anyone by the name of Annette. Could that be the woman he loved, the one who got married to someone else?"

"I'm not following." I remembered he wasn't there and explained what Briggs had told me. When I was done, he hummed to himself. "Annette could be that girl. I am surprised that he thought of her after all this time."

"You'll never know until you read them. They're all addressed to you."

"I can get to them tomorrow," I said in a failed attempt to shrug it off but Ryker wasn't having it. He could clearly see through my bulls hit because he grabbed a hold of my upper arm.

"I think this is the part where you stop pretending not to care about your father," he whispered and his words struck such a deep chord in me that I had to look away. "I know exactly what it is like to have a father who is a complete and utter failure and I know that you are disappointed in who yours turned out to be but I would like to believe that he isn't the worst."

"How do I forgive him for everything? How do I read this knowing everything he has caused for us- for my mother. He cheated on her for the entirety of their marriage. How do I live with that? How do I live with myself if I read this and forgive him?"

"It is possible for someone to be a great father and a terrible husband. It is possible for terrible people to do good things and for good people to do bad.

Your mother would never have wanted you to hate him because of her. That is one of the reasons she kept all of this from you. It is up to you to make your own choices about him. You can toss this away and pretend like you never saw it but it will eat you for the rest of your life.”

I hated how much his words rang true. I hated how much I wanted to know him, not just from what people said to me but because I knew him personally. I hated how much I cared and if I could erase

it in a split second, I would have.

“If you had one chance to talk to your father, to get an explanation, would you take it?” I asked and he hesitated before shaking his head.

“My father was a terrible man and I came to terms with that a long time ago. I made my peace with him when I buried him and I said everything I wanted to say to him when I drove my knife into his gut. I have made peace with that but Camilla, my father is not yours. You cannot hold them to the same standards.”

“Do you think I should read it?”

“I think you should do whatever you think is best. I think you should do what would leave you the least regrets.”

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I sighed because I knew what I had to do. I undid the ribbon holding the pieces of paper together and I could count at least six. I handed the first one to Ryker. “Will you read it to me?”

“Of course,” he said without hesitation. He pulled me into him so he was sitting against the headboard and I was lying with my back pressed to his chest. The lamp was by the bedside offering us what little light it could. “Are you sure about this?”

“Absolutely positive.”

He cleared his throat before starting.

“To my daughter, it has been five years since you went missing and not a day goes by where I do not miss you. I know my time is near but I want to see you before I go. I loved you since the moment you drew your first breath. I looked into

first breath. I looked into your eyes and I knew that you were mine. When Eva had Frederick, I hadn’t wanted much to do with him. I suppose that could make me a bad person considering I didn’t claim one child and I did another but there was something about you.”

“When I held you in my arms, I was enamored by you. I never wanted to be parted from you. You were my daughter, my little girl, you were my heir and I was proud to be your father. When you disappeared, it felt like my entire world



had shattered. Today would have been your fifth birthday and I am spending my days imagining the things I would have done if you were here. I don't know what name you're going by now but in my heart you will always be my little Annette-

"Stop!" I cut him off with a harsh groan. My chest felt like it was being clawed apart. It felt like someone had taken a hot knife and was ripping my insides out and putting them on display. "How could he do that?"

"Do what?" Ryker's voice was soft and probing.

"How can he do this to me? He says he loves me and he couldn't love Frederick. Why would he do that? Why would he choose me? What was it about me that made him stay? What was it that made him write these? Was it because he knew he was dying and wanted to fix his mistakes?"

"I don't know, but it seems very likely," Ryker admitted and I hated his honesty. I wasn't sure if I

wanted him to just hold me or if I wanted his advice. All I knew was that I wanted him. "Whatever it is, Camilla, you have the opportunity to think of your father as a good man. You have the privilege of not seeing his ugly sides. You have the privilege of knowing you were loved, even if it was a temporary bout of madness."

"So I should accept it and forget everything he has done?"

"No, you should accept it, treasure it and move on from it, Camilla. You cannot spend the rest of your life hating your father. You will make yourself sick, baby, you will drag yourself down. You deserve better than that."

"So did my mother and Eva and Frederick."

"Yes, they did, but Camilla, you cannot fight for everyone. You cannot change the past but you can accept it. You don't have to excuse the things he has done, just accept his apology and forgive him. You are the one carrying bitterness in your heart, he is dead and gone."

I crossed my arms over my chest but didn't respond. He sighed in exasperation before tapping my shoulder and standing to his feet. I didn't know what he wanted or where he was going but I followed him. I allowed him take my hand and lead me towards Audrey's room. She was fast asleep in her bed and we stood by the door watching her. He opened the door next to hers revealing Aurora's nursery.

"Look at them," he whispered to me. "Look at your daughters and tell me whether they deserve a mother brimming with anger and bitterness." I opened my mouth to protest but he cut me off. "No, you're going to listen to me, Camilla. Our daughters deserve the best of us. We didn't have the best fathers and I understand that but we don't have to be our parents. We can be exactly what they deserve."

I looked at my children fast asleep. They had been through so much as a result of me and my father's actions. There was a part of me that hated that and wanted to harbor onto that anger but I understood what Ryker meant. They deserved a mother who loved them and a mother who wanted to be with them. They deserved a mother who modeled forgiveness and love to them. "I'm just tired, Ryker," I said softly and he pulled me into his hold. He wrapped his arms around me and pressed a soft kiss to the center of my head. "Why can't things be easy?"

He chuckled to himself. "If it wasn't them it wouldn't be life, baby."

He shut the doors to both rooms before leading me back to ours. I watched as he rolled up the rest of the letters and placed them back in the wooden box. I glanced at my name or what was meant to be my name etched onto the inside of the box.

"Why do you think my mother never told me about my name?" I asked and he stilled. "She could have made me stick to the name Annette. She could have forced me to at that moment and I would have done it."

"Your mother was not the easiest person but if there was one thing she loved, it was identities. Camilla was who you were, it was the life that you had lived and it was the name you had grown.

into. Annette is nobody, Annette would have been the girl who grew up in the palace surrounded by guards and rules. Camilla is the girl who survived for years, she is the girl who fought for herself. Camilla is who you are and she knew that."

I wiped away the stray tear that had leaked down my face. "I don't know if I can forgive him now. I don't know how long it will take until I can."

"I know, baby," he whispered. "Take as long as you need, just make sure that you do it."